

MANUFACTURING EXTENSION PARTNERSHIP

Success Stories from the Field

Nationwide Learning

Mid-America Manufacturing Technology Center

Lean Manufacturing Helps Nationwide Learning Resources Improve Customer Delivery By 61 Percent

Client Profile:

Nationwide Learning Resources Inc., of Topeka, Kansas, manufactures Studenttreasures(TM) publishing kits for grade school student classrooms. Students use the kits to write and illustrate their own books. Nationwide Learning Resources currently employs 25 people.

Situation:

Nationwide Learning Resources (NLR) sees 95 percent of its total annual business occur in a five-month period. After several years in business experiencing an annual growth rate of 25 percent, its product delivery time had increased to an average of 22 days. The company had been telling its customers to allow two weeks for delivery when, in reality, it was taking longer. NLR needed to decrease its delivery time to improve customer service. Nationwide Learning Resources contacted the Mid-America Manufacturing Technology Center (MAMTC), a NIST MEP network affiliate, for help.

Solution:

MAMTC determined that NLR's first step toward reducing order turnaround time should be to decrease the amount of inventory accumulating between work stations. MAMTC first suggested a new layout that eliminated work-in-process inventories and improved work flow. MAMTC helped NLR develop dedicated lines for two types of orders so that the whole order can be completed more quickly. The company reduced its order turnaround time to eight and one-half days and hopes to reduce that time further to five days within the next year. NLR plans to implement the concept of 5S next. 5S is a lean manufacturing technique used to clean and organize all working spaces in the facility, improving efficiency and reducing waste. NLR is confident of maintaining its edge in the marketplace with its high-quality and fast delivery.

Results:

Reduced delivery time by 13 and one-half days.
Decreased inventory.
Improved work flow.
Attained and consistently achieve advertised delivery time.

Testimonial:

www.mep.nist.gov



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"With the Mid-America Manufacturing Technology Center's help, we essentially went from a turnaround time of 22 days in 2001 to 8.5 days in 2002. You might say my ultimate goal is to be the poster child for MAMTC and lean manufacturing."

Duane Turnbull, Production Manager